Legislation on various health sciences

577. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received a request from the Government of Maharashtra for enacting Central Legislation on the issue of various health science courses as this field is not covered by any legislation; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A proposal has been received from the Government of Maharashtra for enacting a Central legislation with regard to the various aspects concerning higher professional education in health sciences. The proposal is in the nature of a suggestion, and no details have been given.

Health problems in Kerala

578. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that serious health problems including deformity of children were reported from Padre village of Kasargod district of Kerala;

(b) whether National Institute of Occupational Health Study found pesticide (Endosulfan) residues in human blood in this area as the reason for causing health problems to the people;

(c) whether in the study it was revealed that residues of Alpha and Beta Endosulfan are found in the environment too; and

(d) if so, the steps Government have taken to stop the use of these hazardous pesticides in this area?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) to

(d) According to a study report of July, 2002, submitted by National Institute of Occupational Health, Ahmedabad which carried out an epidemiological study in Padre village of Kasargod district of Kerala, a possible link was found between the higher prevalence of various ailments including Neuro behavioural disorders, congenital malformation in female subjects and abnormalities related to male reproductive system in the Padre village with the aerial spray of Endosulfan. National Institute of Occupational Health (NIOH), Ahmedabad has informed that residues of Alpha and Beta Endosulfan were found in soil and water samples too. However, Dubey Committee set-up by Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperation, in its report of July, 2003, has concluded that there is no link established between use of Endosulfan in Plantation Corporation of Kerala (PCK) plantations and health problems reported in Padre village of Kasargod District of Kerala. The Committee also found that in view of its no water solubility, high absorption to soil particles and ready and rapid microbial d-composition, it is not expected to travel long distance (from the treated areas) in the tropical environment. The committee *inter-alia* recommended to conduct comprehensive, well designed and detailed health and epidemiological study in entire cashew plantation area of Kerala to ascertain the incidence of diseases in Padre *vis-a-vis* Kerala State averages and also in the event of incidence of unusual health problem to determine probable factors responsible for alleged health problems. It also recommended that use of Endosulfan be continued as per provisions of Insecticides Act, 1968 but aerial spraying of Endosulfan may not be allowed in any situtation including in PCK plantations to ensure full safety.

Further, as per Government of Kerala, an expert committee constituted under the Chairmanship of Dr. P.K. Sivaraman, Addl. Director of Health Services of Government of Kerala in its report submitted in August, 2003, stated that it could not find any other reason other than Endosulfan spraying to explain the reported health hazard. The State Government temporarily banned aerial spraying of Endosulfan and declared pesticide holiday for five years. The Hon'ble High Court of Kerala in its order dated 12.8.2002 in O.P. No. 16300/

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

01 has stayed the use of Endosulfan in the State. The State Government is providing free treatment to those, suffering from the reported problems and providing free medicine to the poor patients.

JPC recommendations on soft drinks

†579. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a Joint Parliamentary Committee had last year examined some soft drinks being sold in the country;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Committee has not recommended these soft drinks as pure;

(c) if so, the names of such soft drinks;

(d) whether it is a fact that these soft drinks are now being examined by other organizations also;

(e) if so, by when the report is likely to be received; and

(f) whether Government have taken a decision to ban the sale of these soft drinks; if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) The Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) examined the analytical data of the samples of soft drinks analysed by the Centre for Science and Environment, New Delhi, Central Food Laboratory at CFTRI, Mysore and Central Food Laboratory, Kolkata for the presence of pesticide residues.

(b) The JPC on the basis of the above mentioned data confirmed the presence of pesticide residues in the carbonated water samples analysed.

(c) The name of soft drinks samples tested by the three laboratories are Pepsi, Diet Pepsi, Blue Pepsi, Mountain Dew, Mirinda Orange, Mirinda Lemon, 7 Up, Coca Cola, Fanta, Limca, Sprite and Thums Up.

(d) to (f) The Government has initiated action on the recommendations of the Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC).

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.